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Cholera
Doxe

W Smith

passed March 7th 1817

No 10

Letter
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of
the
Treasury

Sept 1864

To be acquainted with the functions of the abdominal viscera and thereby be able to comprehend the pathology or diseased state of these parts, it is of the first importance to attend to their connections with each other. The liver, stomach and intestines form the extremities of one complete system of vessels, viz: the vena portarum. The vena portarum may be correctly described as a tree, which shoots its roots widely among the viscera of the abdomen, and extends its branches into the substance of the liver. The bile which is the peculiar secretion of the liver being collected from the extreme branches of the hepatic system by the branches of the ductus hepaticus, flows into the intestines, and as it is their peculiar stimulus it holds a sway over their actions according to the quantity and quality discharged into them. The intestines being excited, have a reciprocal influence upon the glandular viscera, and particularly upon the liver, because on the excitement of the intestines depends the velocity of ^{the} circulation through them; and the returning blood of the intestines is sent back, not into the heart, but through the vena portarum into the liver, and thus in an obvious manner are these viscera connected viz: The intestines with the liver by the biliary secretions, and ^{the} liver with the intestines and stomach through the medium of the circulation.

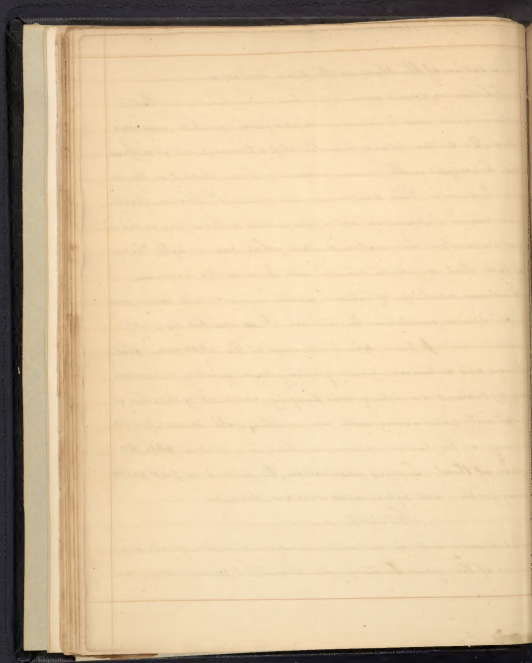
circulation of the blood in the aorta portarum. —

Cholera is derived from $\chi\alpha\lambda\alpha$, bile, and $\rho\lambda\omega$, to flow. Celsus A Cornelianus says the name is derived from $\chi\alpha\lambda\alpha$, bile, and $\rho\omega\phi$, a flux. Dr Cullen places it in the class catarrhus, and orders dysentery. He might with more propriety have placed it in the order Profluvia. The Doctor has two species, 1st Cholera Spontanea which happens in hot seasons and without any manifest cause. 2. Cholera accidentalis which occurs after the use of food that digests slowly, and becomes too acid. —

A copious discharge of bilious matter upwards and downwards with spasm, constitutes this disease. It is marked by great gastric distress, pain, and tenderness of the abdomen, flatulency, and distention, acute gripping pains, quickly succeeded by a violent vomiting and purging, concurring together, or frequently alternating with one another, with spasms particularly of the lower extremities; there is a considerable degree of thirst, hurried respiration, the pulse is at first quick and feeble, but afterwards becomes stronger.

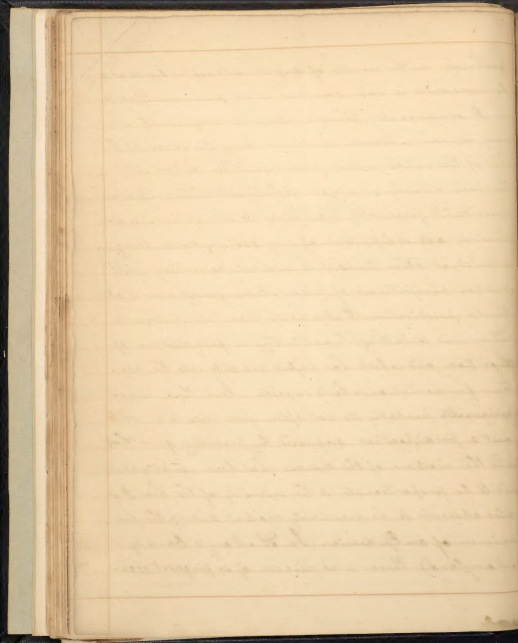
CAUSES

This disease is to be met with in warm climates at all seasons of the year. In temperate climates it prevails most gene-



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generally in the months of August and September, so as to be considered in some countries as an autumnal Epidemic. It occasionally, however, prevails in every climate and every season. Marsh-miasmata may be placed at the head of the causes which predispose to the disease, it is therefore closely analogous to Intermittent Fever, Bilious colic &c. It frequently takes place to all appearance spontaneously and independent of any exciting cause being applied; at other times it is evidently connected with sudden vicissitudes of temperature, giving rise to obstructed perspiration; It also arises from intemperance in eating and drinking; From taking in food difficult of digestion and which has passed readily into the acetous fermentation; Acrid ingesta. But these causes frequently probably do not often give rise to it without a predisposition acquired by preceding great heat and the violence of the disease has been usually observed to be proportionate to the intensity of the heat; It is also observed to be peculiarly violent during the prevalence of an Epidemic. In St Mary's County, (Maryland) There is no disease of so frequent occur-



occurrence as Cholera Morbus; this country is low, nearly
insulated and intersected with muddy creeks and marshes;
a large majority of the inhabitants are Roman Catholics
who in compliance with ^{their} religious tenets, abstain from
flesh two days in the week, and on those days it is
customary with them to feast upon fish, particularly
crabs during the autumnal months, which together with
a predisposition acquired by miasmatic exhalations,
proves not unfrequently the cause of fatal Cholera.

Authors have generally coincided in placing
Cholera under the head of those diseases which de-
pend on the copious secretion of bile. But they
have evidently mistaken the effect for the cause
— a mere symptom for the original disease —
for there is nothing more obvious to every one, than
that it is as completely a gastric affection as any
in the whole catalogue of diseases. Whatever may
be the cause, it acts primarily on the stomach, which
being intimately connected with the liver that organ
receives the impression, and a preternaturally increased
secretion of bile is the consequence; this fluid being



[illegible]

Cholera has been scarce with a few exceptions of
outbreaks in different months. In some cases it has been
so fatal that it has been necessary to bury the dead in
a shallow trench in the ground, and in some cases the
patients have died in the arms of their friends.
The symptoms which have been noticed are, a
sudden attack of vomiting and diarrhoea, the fluids
being of a watery nature, and the patient is unable
to retain any food or drink. In some cases the
patient is seized with a violent cramp, and in some
cases the patient is seized with a violent convulsion.



him out upon the street, covered with much violence
from a great collection of people, who were very
excited, considerable anxiety, a hurried and short res-
piration, hands in the legs colder, & the extremi-
ties and account with a sinking and uncomitting face,
which I could communicate in detail, and that not
unmistakable after some time, and in some cases, and
now in them, in a most violent stage of fever. Some
in cases which terminated fatally in the morning
in one brought in in evening, and another after
succumbing a week or more. It is Chapman's mind
in some cases, some terminate violently between the house
at night and house, which was brought on by ex-
treme exertion.

Treatment

There are many cases of Cholera, and in some
of which it is only a matter of time, the continuation
of a severe attack to allow the continuation of the
disease, it answers the purpose we may give some
of a small quantity of water, in addition to the



menstrual water. — in approving straight. —

The most ancient as also the most common practice is to dilute the contents of the stomach by various drinks of ~~cham~~ amite tea, chicken water, barley water &c. &c. Dr Sydenham, justly much consideration and experience have taught me that to endeavour on the one hand to expel the various humours which feed the disease by purgatives would be like at tempting to extinguish fire with oil, as the most lenient cathartics would increase the disturbance — and raise new tumults. And on the other hand, to check the first effort of the humours in the same beginning by a cold and other astringents, whilst I prevented the natural evacuation and thereby detained the humours within the body, would doubtless destroy the patient by intestine commotion. For my being so near the bounds. These reasons lead me therefore to keep the middle path viz. barely to evacuate and gently to dilute the humours, This is not the only instance on the records of medicine of bad practice from



from apparently plausible theories. The wise physician
on his knees on this disease observe that as he saw
no good reason for the common practice, he is in
the habit of, at once exposing the disease in the ad-
ministration of an emetic. (20, 150. Siccus anther) and
promoting its action by the ordinance of nitrates. The practice
is to me entirely new, and as far as I know originates with
the excellent Professor. But though I have never
seen its effects in this disease, I have not the con-
fidence of its decided superiority over any other with
erto recommended. It causes the system to react and
present to us an other form of disease.

Blood letting forms certainly the most important
part in the treatment of this disease. It is to be regu-
lated by the existing state of the system. The pulse
here, as in almost all the species of Tubercular disease
is a very fallacious guide and one not at all to be
trusted. In the commencement of the pulse is gentle or
moderately full in small quantities we must always in this
case gentle stimuli, and not embrocations. A demand a
reaction, the powers of the system are worn out. In

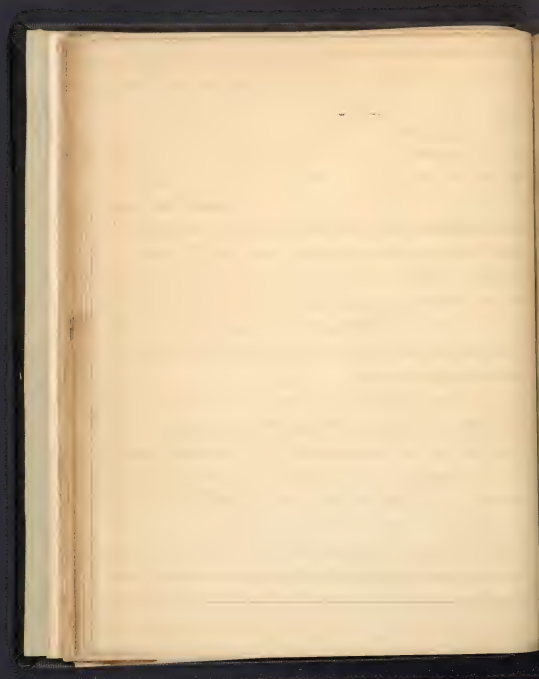


In the very nature of things different nations
are not in a state of perfect equality, but
that is a subject that of course we are then to
accept as we begin state exhortation at first, in
the system we are in a condition to meet this in
a certain way, in a certain way; another time
under these circumstances we shall
with the greatest advantage, promise the work-
men - It causes the system not to be too - allows
the individual of the element - invites the dis-
cussion from the internal to the external surface -
and hence the way for the administration of more
effective remedies.
Our remedy must now be such as we calculated to
reach the circulation of the system more effectively
and to put an entire stop to the reaction and
very especially for us we have a great article of
medicine which answers the end It will be
sufficient for us to consider every medicine
that has been used in the system; I shall there-
fore confine myself to those only which I hear



... it is a common

Quina is generally the first remedy mentioned by us
then who have treated of this disease. It is in some with
it is commoner and I believe it is seldom retained
in the stomach a sufficient length of time to have
done any good effect unless it is if the stomach is in-
evitably the full is left apt to be repeated that the
treatment; in the form of an emetic it has, however,
an emulsion of cod-liver oil will often in a very short
space of time remove all the worst symptoms and
restore the patient from a state of lethargy to an
active, energetic state. In the kind should therefore be ad-
ministered from time to time for a while. The effluvia
being removed is then given an excellent remedy in
the form of emulsion it is made by taking 4 or 5 of Castor
oil or jalapa and dissolve it in a small quantity
of water and then add enough lime or lemon juice
to colorate it. The patient may either take it in the
form of effluvia or he may just take the al-
cali and then the best and let the effluvia
go on in the stomach. The best and best water



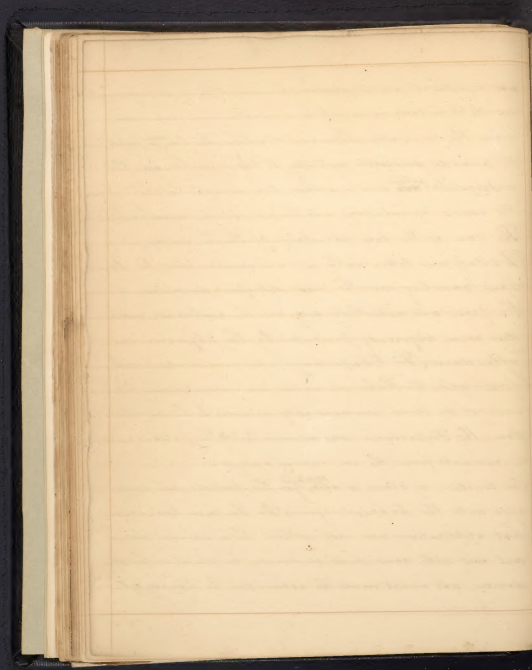


was immediately sent to the hospital to be examined
and the doctor was in a state of great anxiety to find out
from the medical history of the patient what he had ^{been} doing
for several months entirely to their wishes and the
detriment of ^{the patient} ~~the~~ was in a short time enabled to commence
the course of medicine and the patient was awaiting him.
The son of the late secretary of the insurance office
of London was taken with a violent fever the
cause of which was the most distressing symptom of
the fever and notwithstanding the usual remedies
were vigorously prescribed by the physician in
attendance, Dr. Chapman, it has been nearly proved
that when Dr. Chapman was called into consultation the
case was so that it immediately occurred to the physician
how the disease was produced in this patient
in consequence of the violent fever.
The condition of the patient was also, for the disease was very
acute with the highest fever. In the mean time other
not dissimilar cases had without fail occurred -
not only in the hospital but in the houses of the
London and about the suburbs. The frequency of these



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the remedy appears to be increased, by mixing with the liquor used, some tincture of cloves, or oil of mint, ~~or~~ Pulverized pepper, ginger, or other spices formed into a plaster by means of soap and moistened with spirits, may be applied to the same parts. All these remedies failing, as a last resort, Blisters may be advantageously have recourse to, a large one may be applied to the region of the stomach. I say a large one, inasmuch as it is much more efficacious than a small one, it gives no more pain, and is equally ready in healing again. Should there be great disposition to sink, blisters or sinapisms applied to the extremities are indispensable.

The debility consequent to this disease greatly favours its disposition to a relapse from slight causes. We must therefore, strictly enjoin our patient studiously to avoid all the exciting causes of the complaint— as all undue exercise—paroxysms of passions— intemperance in eating and drinking— he is carefully to abstain from every thing that is not easy of digestion, and use such ^{articles} as are light and nutritious. For this purpose a drink consisting of Mucilage of



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of Gum Arabic and Lime water is peculiarly adapted, it
will remain on the stomach when every thing else will
be rejected. He must also observe a due regard to tem-
perature. By warm clothing flannel next to the skin &
cold feet are to be particularly guarded against and
above all, great attention must be paid to the bowels
keep them in a soluble state — and to restore their
tone administer the bitter tonics. The happiest consequen-
ces will result from wearing a flannel roller around
the abdomen; it ought to be applied so as to extend from
the hips to the axilla.

[Faint, illegible handwriting on lined paper, likely bleed-through from the reverse side. The text appears to be organized into several paragraphs.]